

Message Text

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FOLLOWING REPEAT STATE 141978 ACTION RANGOON INFO BANGKOK,
CHIANG MAI DATED JULY 1, 1974 QUOTE
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TAGS: SNAR, BM

SUBJECT: NARCOTICS SUPPRESSION EQUIPMENT - PUBLICITY

1. AT NOON PRESS BRIEFING JULY 1, DEPARTMENT SPOKESMAN
ANNOUNCED THAT THE UNITED STATES AND BURMESE GOVERNMENTS HAD
SIGNED ON JUNE 29 AN AGREEMENT TO PROVIDE SIX HELICOPTERS
TO BURMA FOR NARCOTICS CONTROL PURPOSES. ANSWERS TO
SEVERAL QUESTIONS TAKEN BY THE SPOKESMAN WERE LATER DISTRI-
BUTED TO THE PRESS AS WELL AS THE TEXTS OF THE NOTES
EXCHANGED AND A SPECIAL PRESS RELEASE. TEXTS OF THE QUES-
TIONS AND ANSWERS PLUS THE PRESS RELEASE FOLLOW FOR YOUR
INFORMATION.

2. QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS:

Q: WHO WERE THE U.S. AND BURMESE OFFICIALS SIGNING THE
AGREEMENT?

A: U.S. AMBASSADOR TO BURMA DAVID L. OSBORN AND DIRECTOR-
GENERAL OF BURMESE POLICE U OHN KYI.

Q: WHERE WILL THE FUNDS COME FROM TO PAY FOR THE HELICOP-
TERS?

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A: FUNDS WILL COME FROM A SPECIAL NARCOTICS FUND APPRO-

PRATED BY THE CONGRESS SPECIFICALLY FOR NARCOTICS CONTROL PURPOSES. THE FUND IS ADMINISTERED BY THE SENIOR ADVISOR TO THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR NARCOTICS MATTERS, AMBASSADOR SHELDON VANCE.

Q: ARE THE HELICOPTERS ARMED?

A: NO. THE USG WILL NOT PROVIDE ARMAMENTS FOR THESE HELICOPTERS.

Q: CAN THEY BE USED FOR OTHER THAN NARCOTICS CONTROL PURPOSES?

A: THE AGREEMENT SPECIFIES THAT THEY WILL BE USED PRIMARILY FOR NARCOTICS CONTROL PURPOSES AND THAT ANY OTHER USE WILL BE INCIDENTAL TO THIS PRIMARY PURPOSE. THIS LANGUAGE HAS BEEN USED IN SIMILAR AGREEMENTS SIGNED WITH OTHER COUNTRIES WHERE WE HAVE PROVIDED SUCH EQUIPMENT FOR NARCOTICS CONTROL PURPOSES.

Q: WHY WAS THE BELL HELICOPTER SETTLED ON?

A: AFTER MAKING AN INDEPENDENT SURVEY OF AVAILABLE U. S. HELICOPTERS, THE BURMESE ASKED US SPECIFICALLY FOR THIS AIRCRAFT.

Q: WHY MUST DELIVERY OF THE FIRST SIX AIRCRAFT AWAIT A YEAR IF THE NEED IS SO URGENT?

A: THE DELIVERY SCHEDULE IS DEPENDENT UPON BELL'S PRODUCTION CAPABILITIES AND THE DEMANDS MADE BY OTHER CUSTOMERS. THESE HELICOPTERS WILL BE ORDERED THROUGH CIVILIAN PROCUREMENT CHANNELS AND THE EARLIEST DELIVERY TIME FOR THEM WILL BE ABOUT ONE YEAR, ALTHOUGH WE WILL TRY TO EXPEDITE THE PROCESS.

3. TEXT OF PRESS RELEASE: BEGIN TEXT. THE UNITED STATES GOVERNMENT SIGNED AN AGREEMENT ON JUNE 29 WITH THE BURMESE GOVERNMENT TO PROVIDE SIX CIVILIAN MODEL UTILITY HELICOPTERS (BELL 205A) FOR ASSISTANCE IN ITS NARCOTICS CONTROL PROGRAM. THESE HELICOPTERS WILL BE USED FOR NARCOTICS SUPPRESSION PURPOSES SUCH AS ATTACKING HEROIN REFINERIES AND HEAVILY ARMED CARAVANS ENGAGED IN NARCOTICS TRAFFICKING. THE HELICOPTERS ARE EXPECTED TO BE DELIVERED

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IN BURMA SOME TIME IN 1975. THE AGREEMENT PROVIDES FOR ADDITIONAL HELICOPTERS TO BE DELIVERED AT A LATER DATE DEPENDENT ON APPROPRIATED FUNDS, THE CONTINUING NATURE OF THE REQUIREMENT, AND THE OPERATIONAL UTILITY OF THE HELICOPTERS FOR NARCOTICS SUPPRESSION PURPOSES. NO UNITED STATES GOVERNMENT PERSONNEL WILL BE INVOLVED IN OPERATIONS OR MAINTENANCE OF THE HELICOPTERS. AS IN MANY OTHER COUNTRIES WHERE ILLICIT PRODUCTION OR INTERNATIONAL TRAFFICK-

ING OF NARCOTICS OCCURS, THE UNITED STATES IS ASSISTING
BURMA TO BRING THE NARCOTICS PROBLEM UNDER CONTROL. SISCO
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